



# The Weekly Page

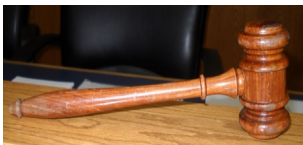
VOLUME 11 ISSUE 4

FEBRUARY 6, 2015

## Pages Learn About The Legislature



### Pages Write Bills, Hold Mock Hearings



During the first three days of their week, pages worked individually or in small groups to write bills designed to address issues which were relevant to them and the state.

Criteria for writing a good bill was discussed before students selected issues to research and develop. Then they used bill templates to formulate official-looking bills in preparation for a mock committee hearing on Thursday. Pages also wrote media releases for their bills which are included in this newsletter.

Pages read their bills and “committee members,” governed by the rules of parliamentary procedure, debated the pros and cons of the proposals. Each bill was voted upon resulting in a “DO PASS” or “DO NOT PASS” recommendation that determines whether the bill continues on in the legislative process. Because pages are in the Page School for only two hours a day for one week, there is not sufficient time to fully develop the final versions of their bills. However, the process of writing and presenting their own bills provides an excellent exposure to the real legislative process.

### Page School on the web

The Page School has its own web site. You can find us at: <http://www.leg.wa.gov/PageSchool> This newsletter has been posted there.

### Blown Away by New Ideas

Olympia – The issue of wind power was considered in committee hearings yesterday when Representative Angela Brimberry introduced House Bill 1337. “Our bill will create jobs, protect the environment, and create more energy to sell to other states,” said Rep. Brimberry. This bill will not only create more jobs, but a healthier environment for us all to live in.



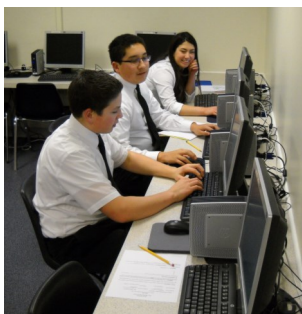
### New School Start Times May Finally Let Teenagers Catch Up On Their Sleep



Olympia – Senate Bill 6216 was introduced yesterday by Senators Aline Escoto and Bronte Polette. “This bill addresses the issue of school start times. The bill will increase hours of

sleep for teenagers and allow them to be more engaged in class,” said Sen. Polette. This bill will allow kids to be more alert during class as well as improve grades and learning in middle schools and high schools. The later start time will also reduce tardiness of the teens that sleep longer.

### Representatives Do Not Idle on Carbon Emissions Bill



Olympia – House Bill 1111 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Thomas Swanson, Madelyn Gonzalez, and James O'Connor. “This bill addresses the issue of carbon emissions. We believe that this bill will reduce carbon emissions in Washington State by 30%! It seeks to make car owners more aware of their vehicle’s carbon

footprint and provides feasible and clean alternatives to fossil fuels,” said Rep. Swanson. The bill will reduce carbon emissions by requiring all counties to subject light-weight and heavy-weight motor vehicles to emission tests, excluding cars made after 2009 and electric cars. It will also implement programs that will bring vehicles that fail such emissions test up to speed with state and federal emission standards. Awareness initiatives will allow drivers to take responsibility for ensuring that their car meets clean standards and leave a smaller carbon footprint.

### Senators Propose Landmark Reform in Paid Parental Leave

Olympia – Wednesday, February 4, 2015 Senators Sara De Roy and Grace Chun introduced Senate Bill 7413, which addresses the issue of parental leave compensation. “The bill is a good one because it will help ensure adequate early care for Washington newborns,” said Sen. De Roy. The Legislature finds that paid parental leave in Washington State is insufficient as it currently stands. It is markedly more difficult for low-income and single parent families to have children. While more affluent families can afford to take time off to care for new children (i.e., infants, adoptees, and foster placements), families who are entirely dependent on the caregiving parent’s income often cannot afford to provide sufficient early care to their children. Not only does childbearing provide a considerable financial burden on these parents, it also affects their children.



**Watch us live at TVW.org**

Search for “Page School” in the Archives to watch yourself in the committee hearings.

### The Number of Homicides Committed by The Mentally Ill is Increasing

Olympia – Yesterday Representatives Lena Stavig, Baxter Lewis, and Alex Oishi introduced House Bill 1432, which addresses the issue of mental health and homicides.

“This bill is necessary and should be required because it will decrease the number of homicides,” said Rep. Oishi. The numbers of people with mental health issues who are committing

homicides are increasing. In this bill, the Legislature will require all people buying a firearm to take a mental health test before they are able to purchase or own a gun. By requiring a psychiatric evaluation to determine if these people are competent, this will decrease the number of homicides drastically.



### Senate Bill 5473 Concerning Gun Violence Introduced

Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Jane Miller and Kaitlin Falk introduced Senate Bill 5473, which addresses the issue of gun violence. “Bill 5473 is imperative to Washington State’s health because there is an abundance of gun violence issues that need to be addressed. We have tried our best to create a bill that will help advance the safety of people,” said Sen. Falk. The Legislature finds that too many people are dying from gun violence. The majority of the killers of the 62 cases of mass shootings nationally since 1982 have been subject to a mental illness. In 2012, Adam Lanza shot his mother and injured 28 students and adults at Sandy Hook Elementary in Newtown shortly before committing suicide. He was diagnosed with sensory-integration disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and Asperger syndrome. Plus it was suspected that he was subject to schizophrenia or psychopathy. In order to increase the safety of all citizens in Washington State, the Legislature will require a mental health examination with the regular background check before a citizen is cleared to be in possession of any type of gun. In addition, the Legislature requires the renewal of a gun license every seven years.





## Longer School Year

Olympia – Yesterday, Senator Aubree Hopkins introduced Senate Bill 5791, which addresses the issue of the required school year length. “The bill is a good one because it will improve the educational results of our students,” said Sen.



Hopkins. This bill will increase the amount of required school days to 200 days each year. Increasing the instructional time will mean that kids learn more each year. Increasing the time that students spend in school will also increase the amount of learning that happens and will help us remain competitive internationally.

## Later School Start Times

Olympia – House Bill 2222 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Ryan Thies, Annie Jurkovich, and Emma Connelly.



“This bill addresses the issue of school start times.” This bill will show that students will be healthier, more attentive, and get the necessary education in order to

be successful,” said Rep. Connelly. The bill will positively affect the education of high school students because currently students are not receiving the necessary sleep to perform well in school. Studies have shown that students assigned start times before 8 a.m. performed worse in all of their courses.

## Tutors Needed - Math and Science

Olympia – Senate Bill 5678 was introduced yesterday by Senators Madison Rath and Elizabeth Lee. “This bill addresses the issue of high school students lacking math and science skills. The bill will provide students the math and science skills they need in order to hold high salary jobs,” said Sen. Rath. Grade 12 students in the U.S averaged a score of 461 in the math section in the Third International Math-



ematics and Science Study (TIMSS), which involved 500,000 students from 41 countries. The global grade average for Grade 12 students was 500. In science, the Grade 12 students in the U.S averaged a score of 480, 20 points below the global grade average. Businesses are also increasingly looking for talent overseas. To fix this, our bill proposes to require that all public high schools have a tutoring program. AP students and students with high passing grades can take an elective class to tutor students failing their science and/or math classes.

## Make a River Run Through It

Olympia – House Bill 2015 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Sara Cho, Cody Castillo, and Rachael King. “This bill addresses the issue of fish ladders. The bill



will reduce the ecological stress produced by dams by requiring dams without fish passages to install fish ladders.” said Rep. Cho. The presence of dams has negatively affected the population of salmon, with a decrease of about 85% in local populations. This has a negative impact on the food web as salmon do not return to their rivers to spawn. The lack of running salmon leaves animals, such as raccoons, bears, birds, and even invertebrates without a large food supply that would normally occur if the salmon had passage through the dams. Fish ladders are built in a series of steps to allow the fish to pass over the dam. The state of Oregon requires the presence of fish ladders at all dams and the enforcement of this law would have a positive effect on the economy of Washington State as it is based mainly on fishing.

## The CO<sub>2</sub> Mission

Olympia – Yesterday, Representatives Zoey Warner and Brianna Lynch introduced House Bill 2753, which addresses the issue of carbon dioxide emissions. “The bill is a good one because it will prevent air pollution from causing cancer, asthma, climate change, and other illnesses,” said Rep. Warner. This bill will reduce the amount of carbon dioxide by requiring vehicles to get tested every other year or to get filters in order to prevent illnesses due to air pollution.



## Guest Speakers Visit Page School

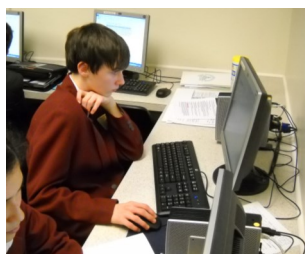


This week the **Code Reviser Kyle Thiessen** joined the pages during classes on Wednesday. He spoke about what led him to his current position and shared insightful information about the legislative process and how the Code Reviser's office works. Pages

were able to interact by asking questions and sharing their own views in response to the speaker's questions.

## Senator Pushes Sweeping Reforms of Education Funding

OLYMPIA – Senate Bill 5737 was introduced yesterday by Senator Kyle Metscher. “This bill addresses education funding, especially on a by-student basis. The bill will establish a system of vouchers, each earmarked for 2,000 dollars to cash in at any participating educational facility,” said Sen. Metscher. “K-12 funding in Washington is in a dismal state. We are spending millions on education, but our test scores are not going up. This bill will radically change the method of funding for schools, by allocating 2,000 dollars to each student for the purpose of using at any educational facility of their choice. This bill will create a market incentive among competing schools; thus increasing the quality of education. No new taxes will be created to fund this bill, as it is relatively lean, and under the McCleary decision schools will be funded before anything else.”



## Experienced Educators

Sharon Heath is in her second year as the Page School teacher; however, she is definitely not new to the Washington Legislature having worked nearly 20 years for the Legislature's computer support agency. She



has also earned a Master's in Education and has taught middle school as well as college students.

Leo O'Leary has been teaching and coaching in and around Olympia for the past ten years and is in his fourth session as a Page School teacher. “I really like the fact that I can help kids make their dreams come true through both education and athletics,” he said as he introduced himself on Monday.

## The Death Penalty Has Been Banned In Washington State



Olympia – Yesterday, Senators Connie Chavez and Mirella Dado introduced Senate Bill 6181, which addresses the issue of the death penalty. “The bill is a good one because it

saves the government quite a lot of money which can now be used to fund other important issues in our present society,” said Sen. Chavez. Besides saving money, this bill also will prevent false accusations leading to death row, provide a superior punishment, and it will be carried out in a more efficient and timely manner.

## Big Ideas in Government

Throughout the week pages grappled with our the three “big ideas” for a representative government: governing is a complex process, successful democracies rely on responsible citizens, and government affects our life every day. As they participated in daily discussions and group activities, and proposed bills in mock committee hearings, their understanding of these concepts grew. Class activities introduced new vocabulary words, explained legislative procedures, and explored the bill writing process. On Friday, they individually wrote about one of these “big ideas” to demonstrate the depth of their new knowledge.

## Putting the Kill on Pause

Olympia – House Bill 1990 was introduced yesterday by Representatives Byanca Young and Madeline Prentiss. “This bill addresses the issue of wolves. The bill will provide better protection for the livestock of farmers in Washington along with the wolf packs,” said Rep. Young. It requires ranchers to install a Radio-Activated Guard system (RAG) or Nite Guard Solar as a step for wolf protection. If a wolf attack occurs and three cattle are killed with sufficient evidence, then the rancher can apply to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to have the wolf (ves) removed to a new location. If the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife does not respond within 30 days, then the rancher may apply for a permit to kill one wolf per three livestock attacked.

